



**Office of the State Superintendent of Education
FY14 School Improvement Grant (SIG) Section 1003(g)**

Request for Applications (RFA)

Name of Grant Program:	FY 2014 Title I 1003(g) School Improvement Grant
Authorization:	2001 Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Part A, Subpart I
Amount of Funds:	<p>Total amount of funds for the FY 2014 Title I 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG): \$1,322,532.05</p> <p>Individual grant awards will range from not less than \$50,000 per school to no more than \$2,000,000.00 per each Priority and/or Focus school annually.</p> <p>The SEA will allocate SIG funds to a local education agency (LEA) in an amount that is of sufficient size and scope to support a school intervention model in its Priority and/or Focus schools that the LEA commits to serve.</p>
Grant Period:	SY 2015-16 through SY 2017-18



A. Purpose of the Title I Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant:

School Improvement Grants (SIG), authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA), are grants to State educational agencies (SEAs) that SEAs use to make competitive subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to raise substantially the achievement of students in their lowest-performing schools. The Department published final requirements for the SIG program in the *Federal Register* on October 28, 2010 (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-28/pdf/2010-27313.pdf>). In 2015, the Department revised the final requirements to implement language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, and the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, that allows LEAs to implement additional interventions, provides flexibility for rural LEAs, and extends the grant period from three to five years. The revisions to the requirements also reflect lessons learned from four years of SIG implementation. Finally, after the final requirements for the SIG program were published in 2010, 44 SEAs received approval to implement ESEA flexibility, pursuant to which they no longer specifically identify Title I schools for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. To reflect this change, the revised requirements make an LEA with priority schools, which are generally a State's lowest-achieving Title I schools, and focus schools, which are generally the schools within a State with the largest achievement gaps, eligible to receive SIG funds.

B. Eligibility

To ensure that SIG funds are targeted toward the schools that face the greatest academic challenges, OSSE will award SIG funds first to LEAs with Priority schools that: 1) will be in the implementation phase (the second year subsequent to identification and beyond) of school improvement under Priority status for the 2015-16 school year; and 2) have not yet received SIG funds. While Focus schools are eligible to apply for SIG funding, the OSSE anticipates only awarding funds to approximately 2-4 Priority schools given the limited amount of available SIG funding (\$1,322,532.05) and the large number of schools currently classified as Priority schools.

C. Grant Award Information

Successful applicants may be awarded amounts less than requested. Should the LEA be awarded an amount less than requested, OSSE reserves the right to request and approve an amended budget and budget narrative prior to the first reimbursement. The sub-grant is offered for a period of three years from the date of award, not to exceed September 30, 2018. The applicant is to create a budget that corresponds to the length of the grant period. For example, the applicant must provide a budget and budget narrative that substantiates the need for a draw-down of the sub-grant award over three years. The total duration of this sub-grant shall not exceed three years; therefore, no budget and budget narrative for this award shall be for more than three (3) years.

Grant award payments will be made in accordance with the OSSE's reimbursement policy, the approved grant application, performance objectives, and accompanying project budget. A final accounting for the entire project shall be submitted to the OSSE no later than ninety (90) days after either the final expenditure of grant funds or by the end



of the grant period, whichever comes first. Additionally, all expenditure information must be kept in accordance with Federal regulations and OSSE guidelines.

D. Review Panel

The review panel for this RFA will be composed of neutral, qualified professional individuals who have been selected for their unique and related experiences. The panel will review, score, and rank each applicant's application. When the panel has completed its review, it shall make recommendations for awards based on the SIG Application Requirements.

E. Decision on Awards

The recommendations of the review panel are advisory only and not binding on the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. The final decision on awards is vested solely with the State Superintendent of Education. After reviewing the recommendations of the panel and any other information considered relevant, the OSSE shall make the decisions regarding which applications will be awarded and the amounts to be funded.

a. Renewal of Funding

The SEA will consider the following factors annually in determining whether to renew funding:

- ☐ The SEA will annually evaluate whether the LEA has made sufficient progress on the implementation based on each school's plan. In cases in which the LEA has not made sufficient progress in providing support and implementing the selected model with fidelity, the LEAs sub-grant will be considered for repeal.

b. Termination of Funding

Funding shall be terminated if there is evidence of fraud or fiscal irregularity in the use of funds for their intended purpose.

F. Permissible Use of Funds

SIG funding shall be used to support school improvement efforts by LEAs and their eligible schools funded by this sub-grant process. Sub-grant funds may be used for staff salaries, materials, services, training, equipment, supplies, evaluation, facilities, or other purposes, except as specifically limited by all applicable legal requirements including all regulations or statutes or by the SEA. Each eligible LEA that receives an award may use the funds to carry out activities that advance the SIG sub-grant priorities. Sub-grantees may only use the sub-grant funds for their intended purposes.

The SIG funds must supplement, not supplant, existing services and may not be used to supplant federal, state, local, or nonfederal funds. Programs may not use SIG funds to pay for existing levels of service funded from any other source. An LEA that commits to serve one or more Priority schools must ensure that each of those schools receive all of the state and local funds it would have received in the absence of the SIG funds.

Grant funds can be paid by a sub-grant recipient to partnering LEAs and non-LEAs. Partnerships may be with entities such as other LEAs, non-profit organizations, and institutes of higher education. An applicant who intends to provide sub-grant funding to a third-party must identify that third-party and must provide evidence of



that third-party's expertise in increasing student achievement and improving teacher effectiveness. The use of these funds by a third-party must be captured in detail in the proposed budget and budget narrative.

G. Reporting and Accountability Requirements:

Applicants awarded SIG funds must satisfy periodic reporting and accountability requirements throughout the term of the subgrant. These requirements address: (1) program accountability; (2) fiscal reporting requirements; (3) site visits; and (4) program evaluation.

1. Program Accountability:

- a) Each identified Priority and/or Focus school and LEA receiving SIG subgrant funds is responsible for carrying out its school improvement responsibilities under ESEA [Section 1116\(b\) and \(c\)](#), respectively.
- b) Each LEA and school receiving a SIG subgrant is responsible for carrying out its school improvement responsibilities in accordance with its approved subgrant application and improvement plan. This includes making progress toward annual school goals.
- c) For any Priority and/or Focus schools, the LEA must provide school-level data on all of the metrics designated by the Department.

2. Fiscal Reporting Requirements:

The LEA must include on its application a list of each of the schools served, their National Council on Education Statistics (NCES) Identification Number, Classification, the intervention model selected for each school, the total amount of funds requested to implement chosen intervention model, amount of funds (of total amount) to be allocated to the school, and amount of funds (of total amount) to be used at the LEA level to provide services to the school.

3. Site Visits:

If selected as part of a site visit sample, LEAs and their funded schools must agree to site visits by the Department of Education (the Department), the Office of the State Superintendent of Education or the regional consortia. The site visit is intended to validate information provided in expenditure and program evaluation reports and gather more detailed information on implementation efforts and challenges, and provide technical assistance and support.

4. Program Evaluation:

All SIG recipients will be responsible for fulfilling the following program evaluation requirements:

- a. Report annual accountability data to the OSSE including, but not limited to:
 - i. Fiscal information on the use of grant funds provided under ESEA Section 1003(g)



- ii. Measures to demonstrate implementation of research- and evidence-based strategies identified in the subgrant application
 - iii. The number and percentage of students who score proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics, as measured by the state's annual assessments, both overall in the LEA and for each school receiving funds through this application
 - iv. Whether the LEA has met its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)
 - v. Respond to any specific data requests from the Department
- b. Utilize annual student achievement goals and student achievement data to evaluate the effectiveness of improvement strategies identified in the SIG subgrant application for purposes of local monitoring and continuous improvement efforts
 - c. In addition, the OSSE will review the performance of participating schools on the nine leading indicators identified by the Department in its January 20, 2015, SIG guidance (SIG Leading Indicators tab).

H. SELECTION CRITERIA

LEAs with eligible Priority and/or Focus schools may apply for SIG funding through this application. When recommending sub-grant applications for funding, the OSSE will recommend funding those applications that fully comply with all requirements described in this RFA. Applications found not to meet those requirements will not be recommended for funding. The SEA will only consider awarding funds to those LEAs that develop and submit a comprehensive and viable application likely to improve student academic achievement. Each LEA application will be reviewed and scored according to the following process against the Application Rubric (See Application Rubric tab).

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

a. Insurance

Each applicant must submit a **Certificate of Insurance** that reflects the coverage and amount under the policy as well as the dates of coverage and renewal.

b. Audits

At any time prior final payment and for three (3) years thereafter, the District and respective jurisdictional administrative agencies may have the applicant's expenditure statements and source documents audited.

c. Nondiscrimination in the Delivery of Services

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352), as amended, no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, religion, nationality, sex, or political opinion, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under, any program activity.

d. W-9



If not already on file with the Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support (OPCSFS) or needs to be updated, the Applicant is submitting a completed and signed W-9. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that a current, signed W-9 is on file with OPCSFS.

e. Additional Information

The OSSE reserves the right to request and be provided with additional information, such as financial statements, should the need occur.

f. Monitoring and Reporting

The OSSE will monitor the sub-grantee through the following but not limited to: site visits, periodic telephone check-ins, etc. The specific schedules will be established and agreed upon immediately after the grant is awarded.

g. Organizational and Governance Documents

Upon notification of award, sub-grantees must certify that the following documents are on file at its business offices: organizational charts, signed articles of incorporation, and any other organizational and governance documents of the agency.

h. Cooperation with OSSE

The sub-grantee will:

- ☐ Cooperate with the OSSE in evaluating the program;
- ☐ Provide OSSE with data as requested (i.e.; Leading Indicators)
- ☐ Participate in all monitoring to be conducted at both the LEA/school level
- ☐ Provide evidence of full-implementation of the chosen turnaround model
- ☐ Comply with the guidelines of each turnaround model
- ☐ Maintain appropriate financial management practices as required, including tracking activity; and
- ☐ Submit reimbursements in accordance to OSSE Reimbursement Guidelines

i. Conflict of Interest

Sub-grantees must avoid apparent and actual conflicts of interest when administering grants.